

Summary of the Friday Sermon Delivered by Hazrat Mirza Tahir Ahmad - Khalifatul Masih IV, on 10th October 1997

This is a special Friday because it is *Friday the 10th*. In this relation it is hoped that God would show many a Sign on this day as well. In any case we would bow in reception to whatever is graced to us by God. Just before I came I received a Phone-call from the Amir of Gambia and that is a Sign too. God shows such wonders every Friday which causes the heart to bow before Him even more. I had already informed regarding the mischief in Gambia that God repeatedly granted the tiding through [the revelation] 'Is not Allah sufficient for His servant?' Thereafter God always shows a new Sign every Friday. The Sign today is that the Secretary who acted deviously after [Buba] Bojang has been replaced. This may be a minor thing but it is hoped that it would have far-reaching consequences. Whether it be considered it a great Sign or a small Sign. The blessing of Allah is His blessing alone. One should always be grateful for it.

I have been requested by 2 large Jamats to give them a Target this year in which they would with the blessing of Allah try to excel all other Jamats of the world. These 2 large Jamats are Germany and America. The most exceptional thing is Prayer. There is no greater Target than that of Prayer. Make exceptional efforts in Prayer. All *Khuddam* [youth], *Ansar* [elders], children and women should make efforts in relation to Prayer because this is the central thing. If this is established then everything else would be sorted. Prayer is the very pinnacle of worship. The ascent of Prayer relates to humility. The loftiest ascent is that of the prostration where one places the forehead on the ground and declares 'Holy is my Lord the highest'. The secret to all grandeur lies in this lying low which one adopts for the sake of God.

The Jamat should turn to Prayer in the year inaugurated by this *Jumma*. During the recent tour a girl from an Ahmadi family requested a private meeting following an audience with her family. When she came for the personal audience she was so overcome with emotion that she could hardly speak. When she gained some control [over herself] she said that 'I have no physical or material problem with my husband. He is a very kind person. He sees to all my needs. He cares for the children. He pays for all of my expenses whatever they may be. He pays the Jamat *Chandas* [financial contributions] as I instruct him but he does not offer the Prayers'. It had a deep bearing upon my heart that an Ahmadi girl is so grieved at her husband's disregard of offering the Prayers and thinks that if he does not offer the Prayers then there is nothing to him, and this is indeed correct. If one's faith serves to reform one's temperament then it cannot be that such a person would not keep up the Prayers.

With reference to 'Be watchful over Prayers and the Middle Prayer, and stand before Allah submissively.'¹ Draw your attention once again to be particularly eager to safeguard the Prayers especially the Middle Prayer. In الصلاة الوسطى ['the Middle Prayer'] there are different situations for people. People's individual circumstances change. The meaning of the Middle Prayer also changes along with those circumstantial changes. It means the Prayer which comes in the middle, the Prayer which comes in the middle of one's tasks making it difficult to offer. Current experience reveals that it is the dawn Prayer especially in cultures where it

¹ *The Holy Quran*. al-Baqarah [The Heifer]: 239.

is customary to wake till late into the night. This disease is to be found more among the relatively affluent families. They wake till far into the night and adorn their gatherings with chatting. In order to reform the Ahmadiyya Community and direct it onto the right paths it is important to present these troublesome examples before you. So I do not shirk from admitting that this weakness is found among the Jamat and it is to be found in such a class which has relations with every family.

The Noble Messenger ﷺ stated on one occasion that ‘I want to burn down the houses of those who fail to attend the dawn Prayers’. This is an expression of extreme anger. But the Holy Prophet ﷺ did not do this so nobody else has the right to deal with physical or apparent force it is however important to feel anguished at such a situation. As far as coercion is concerned it serves as a kind of warning to those who fail to offer the dawn Prayer in that they prepare a sort of hell for themselves and it is best to avoid the hell of the hereafter. This statement of the Holy Prophet carries the message that those who are negligent of the Morning Prayer are making preparations for their own burning. It would be better for them to burn in this world than to burn in the Hell [prepared] by God by neglecting the dawn Prayers.

It is also customary in places such as Europe that the daily Prayers which come in the middle of tasks are ignored and neglected in favour of the excuse of work. All those western nations who find the Prayer [timings] to come during their work or during the nights should regard the Middle Prayer. They should consider that if they cannot offer the Prayers because of their work they should favour the commandments of Allah and leave work. If you disregard this obligation you would ruin your afterlife as well as your present. So concentrate upon it anew. If your Employers understand this and you are able to explain it to them you can find opportunity to offer the Prayers right in the middle of the work [hours]. If they fail to understand it then as I have mentioned providence is in the hands of Allah and if it is time to offer sacrifice then this is the very time when you should prefer the pleasure of Allah. Give Prayer its due regard which is one of respect and of reverence. I hope that the Worldwide Ahmadiyya Community would attend to this more than before in every place because our faith, our world, our life, is in the Prayer. If this is gone then we would have nothing left. Prayers established through shunning the world are those which make you obedient to Allah.

Worship is the fundamental attribute of humanity which makes one a servant of God. Worship is deeply connected with one’s intention. If one intends to present oneself before Allah as a servant then that is the moment one’s worship begins. If this worship does not form the basis of the other Prayers then those others Prayers would be hollow.

Although I have drawn attention to offering the Prayers on a number of previous occasions but it seems that it needs to be reiterated. I humbly request all those who are connected to the Jamat, those who feel attachment towards me to keep up the Prayers. Return to the dawn Prayer and safeguard the Middle Prayer. I hope that the Jamat would take these admonishments to heart. It is these Prayers which are to conquer the world for Islam. May Allah enable us to act upon all these instructions and to be deemed the truthful and the pure before God.